



Happy Holidays!



## DCFS Weekly Update From the State Office

Friday, December 22, 2000

### From My Perspective

*By Ken Patterson*

Wow, the year 2000 is nearly gone. It will be memorable for me and frankly I'm glad it's behind us. It has been a good year, but a tumultuous one. It began with our agency having to endure a hiring freeze, but ended with us having earned a reputation in state government financial circles as an agency that can correct its own budget problems. During all of this you have continued to do the kind of work with families and children that makes me openly proud to share Utah's performance data. You managed to do all this while coping with higher than usual caseloads, beginning Practice Model training, participating in Qualitative Case Reviews, and calming frustrated adoptive parents. Many of you have also endured the uncertainties of establishing the Salt Lake Valley Region. And at the end of the year you go the extra mile by coordinating Christmas gift drives, arranging foster children parties, and volunteering to do special events in your church and community. So in retrospect it was a very demanding year.

But by all indicators we are emerging from it okay and perhaps with strengthened credibility. The Governor's budget recommendations, our legislative package, and the trends of the client outcomes you are producing all give me great hope for the coming year. Most of us having been doing this work long enough to know that the only constant is change. And that's okay if you can see that the net result of the change is heading in a good direction.

It's the definition of "good direction" that becomes highly personal. To me it means that our affiliation with our organization is satisfying professionally and personally and that the stressors and demands of the work are offset by the sense of accomplishment that the work itself provides and the quality of relationships we enjoy with our colleagues.

If you are doing the personal end-of-year inventory on these issues I hope you find the ledger in the black and that your experience with DCFS is worth repeating for another year.

I sincerely appreciate how hard the work you have chosen is; I reflect often on how your efforts make a difference in the lives of children and their families; differences that are sometimes not even visible for many years. And these lives that you helped stabilize, or often saved, contribute to the well-being of all of Utah's communities, make it a great place to live.

Yesterday I got the chance to present a 25-year service award to Chuck Parsons. Chuck is the contracts specialist for the state office. Over the years he has done all the casework and supervisor jobs that many of you now hold. Chuck told of a 30-something woman spotting him in a grocery store and calling out “Mr. Parsons...Mr. Parsons.” No one calls Chuck “Mr. Parsons” so he immediately knew it was a former client. He could not immediately place her name or face, but she wanted him to know that she was a mom now and that she was doing okay. She thanked him for being kind and doing his job. His work with her happened 10 to 15 years ago, yet what he had done for her was still important to her. Many of you have similar experiences and many of you will have them in the future. They become a firsthand validation of the importance of the work.

Thank you for your efforts throughout this past year. I look forward to sharing the Governor’s budget and the Division’s legislative stuff with you on our January 5<sup>th</sup> videoconference. Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

## Guiding Principles

*By Richard Anderson*

Recently, I was in a meeting with representatives from the Navajo Nation. As some of you know, I lived on the Navajo Reservation for a time. In fact, this is where I made the choice of social work as my life’s career. I have learned much from my experiences and friends on the reservation and continue to do so. I often cycle back to the gifts I was given by seeing the world through a different lens. After the meeting, I met two social workers that gave me a brochure of the services their organization offers on the reservation. The brochure had a list of guiding principles that immediately struck me with their depth of meaning. Here are a few of the principles mentioned on that brochure:

- We are responsive to the special needs of each individual, moment to moment.
- We are motivated by the needs of each of our individuals.
- We enrich the lives of our individuals through a compassionate and secure family atmosphere.
- We trust and respect one another.
- We recognize every individual's right to express themselves without fear of reprimand.
- We act with integrity, honesty, and a sense of ethic, and we keep our commitments.
- We listen and hear one another with an open mind.
- We will be accountable to other team members for our actions.
- We will treat all individuals equally.

Some of the words that captured my feelings and thoughts were these: "moment by moment," "motivated by the needs," "compassionate and secure family atmosphere," "we keep our commitments," "listen and hear," and "equally." I appreciate the sensitivity I hear in those words to the real needs of us all. I appreciate my Navajo friends. They have again brought clarity to me. These guidelines fit well with our Practice Model and I wanted to share them with all of you.

## Written Referrals for Training

*By Kelsey Lewis*

The Utah Foster Care Foundation (UFCF) is attempting to improve upon the recruitment and training process by accurately tracking information on the families entering pre-service training. Beginning January 1, 2001, UFCF recruitment staff will be conducting an "Initial Consultation" with every family prior to registering them for pre-service training. Initial Consultations will help obtain information on the motivations, expectations and characteristics of each family before they begin the training and licensing process. This process will also enable us to ensure that we are recruiting families who are able and willing to meet the placement needs of the foster children in their community. Since families cannot enter training without successfully completing an "Initial Consultation," it will be necessary for all DCFS caseworkers to provide a "written referral" to the Utah Foster Care Foundation when referring a kinship or specific family to pre-service training. If workers need an application for a family who is not going to attend training, please provide a written request to UFCF and we will send out an application for you. If you are working with a specific or kinship family who is deciding whether or not to attend training and become a licensed foster parent, we would be happy to send them an information packet outlining our pre-service curriculum and general foster care information. Written referrals can be e-mailed or faxed to your local UFCF Area Representative or Recruiter. Thank you for your assistance in this process!

### UFCF Area Representatives

Salt Lake Valley Region: Valoy Seeley	(801) 994-5205	Valoy@utahfostercare.org
Northern Region: Brenda Durtschi	(801) 392-1114	Brenda@utahfostercare.org
Western Region: Nancy Peck	(801) 373-3006	Nancyp@utahfostercare.org
Southwest Region: Debbie Hofhines	(435) 656-8065	Debbie@utahfostercare.org
Eastern Region: Les Harris (Uintah Basin)	(435) 781-4224	lesharris@easilink.com
Char Carter (Moab)	(435) 259-3345	charufcf@lasal.net

## To Make Your Life Easier...Using SAFE Optimally

*By Robert Lewis*

SAFE Help Desk staff ask that in order to expedite your requests quickly (by telephone or e-mail), it helps to have the following information available when you call (or included in the e-mail), depending on what needs fixing:

- Know the **identifier** for the entity that needs changes:  
CASE: Case ID (Ref/Case #)  
PERSON: Person ID (SAFE ID #) or Client ID (O#)
- To fix **placements/purchase service authorizations**:  
Case ID (Ref/Case #)  
Client ID  
Provider Name  
Provider ID  
Start Date  
Service Type  
*(Remember to give us explicit information on what needs to be fixed)*
- For **merging clients in the mainframe** (O# merge):  
Client ID and/or Person ID  
Client Name (of all persons to be merged)  
Any requests to **reopen or change identifying information on closed CPS cases** after 30 days need to be e-mailed to Abel Ortiz for approval. Abel will then forward the information to the SAFE Help Desk, and the request will be completed.
- Please be aware of disposition time frames when requesting **CPS cases to be undispositioned**:  
Priority 1 – One day  
Priority 2 – Two days  
Priority 3 – Three days (excluding weekends and holidays)

*WE **CANNOT** undisposition cases that are out of compliance for the initial contact.*